DEMAND FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANT.

DEMAND XXI—CO-OPERATIVE DEPARTMENT.

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR: Sir, I beg to move for a grant not exceeding Rs. 2,800 for the current year for the appointment of four temporary additional Co-operative Inspectors on a pay of Rs. 40-5/1-70 *plus* a permanent travelling allowance of Rs. 30 per mensem, with a temporary peon each and contingencies.

The Co-operative Department is now staffed by seven Inspectors. This was the result of the reorganisation of the department effected in 1920, when the number of Co-operative Societies working in the State was 114. This gave 20 Societies on an average for each Inspector at that time. The number of Inspectors then fixed was on the model of the number obtaining in the Madras Presidency where, under the reorganisation of the department effected in 1919, 184 Co-operative Inspectors were sanctioned for 3,676 Societies, giving an average of 20 Societies per Inspector. Since 1920, the number of Societies in Travancore has increased very largely and rapidly, their present number being as high as 385. The number of these Societies, as the House will see, has more than trebled itself during the last two years. The senior Inspector among the seven has now been on other duty for the past few months in training the Inspectors who have not had any benefit of training either in Madras or elsewhere, and in doing other special work, so that, practically, only six Inspectors have been doing the actual work of inspection which gives an average of 64 Societies per Inspector. Such an arrangement by no means conduces to efficiency, and it is not in vogue in any other country where the co-operative movement is in progress. In Madras, as I said, the number of Societies per Inspector was 20 in 1919 and, according to the latest figures available, it has risen to 27. In Cochin again, the number of Societies is about 20, while in Mysore it is about 35 per Inspector. It has, therefore, become imperative to strengthen the number of Inspectors here to some extent, so that they may be able to cope with the diverse items of work devolving on them more satisfactorily than at present. What the Inspectors now do during the first three months of the year is to conduct the work of annual audit and stock-taking of Societies, while during the remaining months of the year they move about, doing the work of exhaustive audit and checking, conducting inspections, organising fresh Societies and registering them, and engaging themselves in propoganda work. These are the legitimate duties of the Inspectors in all States where the Co-operative Department has been organised. At the initial stage of the movement, it also becomes necessary for the Inspectors to help Societies in the collection of arrears of loans, though, at a later stage, they may conveniently divest themselves of this function. It will thus be seen that the work of Co-operative Inspectors is both manifold and onerous, and that such work must necessarily suffer unless the number of hands engaged to do it is reasonably adequate.

present Registrar of Co-operative Societies, who has received a

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special training in Co-operation in Madras, has been often urging on the Government the need for appointing a few more Inspectors, and it is in pursuance of his repeated recommendation that the Government now apply for the permission of this House to appoint four more Inspectors. It will be noted that these new Inspectors are going to be appointed only temporarily, and it will be time enough for the House to consider the whole question at the end of the year when the budget for 1099 comes up for consideration. With these words, I request that the grant for which I have applied may be voted.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: Sir, although I am of the opinion that supplementary demands for grants should not ordinarily be granted without close scrutiny, I will support the demand now before this Council without the least hesitation. Of all the development departments, the Co-operative Department is destined to be the most potent factor in the economic regeneration of this country. It is still in its infant stage and no one need be disheartened by occasional instances of failures in the case of individual Societies. The history of Co-operation in every land is replete with such instances in its earlier stages. Considering that the department began its work only some seven years ago, the progress it has already made in the direction of starting societies is indeed very satisfactory, and the time has come for devising ways and means for providing the department with an adequate staff to cope with its increasing responsibilities. The people of this country have only begun to realise the benefits of Co-operative Societies. The Credit Societies, in particular, are attracting the attention of our rural population who, of all classes, stand in need of cheap credit. Only the other day, we witnessed an attempt to raise the legal rate of interest in this Council. The extent of the indebtedness of our ryots and the sufferings they undergo at the hands of money-lenders are such that they would gladly avail themselves of any remedy for bettering their condition, provided that they are made to understand its efficacy and are given easy facilities for procuring it. The propaganda work of our Co-operative Department should therefore be considerably increased without undue delay. For this and other reasons, I heartily support the demand which, though insufficient to meet the needs of the department in full, should be regarded as an earnest in the direction of efficiently equipping the department with the necessary *personnel* to carry on its work on a wider scale.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: Sir, I also beg to support the motion for this supplementary grant.

MR. M. K. KADIR PILLAI: Sir, I also beg to support it.

MR. A HOOGEWERF: Sir, so do I.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The question is that the House do sanction a grant not exceeding Rs. 2,800 for the Co-operative Department, for the appointment of four temporary additional Co-operative Inspectors on Rs. 40-5/1-70 *plus* a permanent travelling allowance of Rs. 30 per mensem, with a temporary peon each and contingencies.

The motion was carried and the grant was made.

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